WORCESTER — Robert Thomas, outgoing division director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Opportunity Center on Chandler Street, chats with South Middlesex Opportunity Council case manager Sadie Burgos of Worcester during an open house Tuesday celebrating Thomas' tenure at the center. T&G Staff/CHRISTINE HOCHKEPPEL

Mr. Thomas was a founder of the MLK Jr. Business Empowerment Center in 1994 and was its president through 2012, when it was merged into SMOC and subsequently renamed.